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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 26th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 6 October 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)

later: Mr. PHOOFOLO (Lesotho)
(Vice-President)

later: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)
(President)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Gurirab (Namibia)
Mr. Romulo (Philippines)
Mr. Ndolo Ayah (Kenya)
Mr. Aitmatov (Kyrgyzstan)
Mr. Carias Zapata (Honduras)

- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: second report of the General Committee [8] (continued)

- Tentative programme of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GURIRAB (Namibia): Since its inception in 1945, the United Nations has spearheaded humanity's common yearning for a peaceful, just and prosperous world, a world freed at last from war, caprice, greed and other abominable human and social impulses.

The brilliant and forward-looking authors of the Charter of the United Nations and the rest of us who are the beneficiaries of their collective wisdom and imagination have reason to hope for a firm consolidation of a democratic, stable and compassionate world order, which would make a clean break with the past, characterized by two unprecedented and most destructive world wars in this century.

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

This world order, the optimists proclaimed, would be governed by the rule of law, respect for human rights, universal exercise of the right to self-determination, recognition of the equality of all nations, large and small, and sharing among the members of the human family. On this basis it was fair to expect that the great achievements in science and technology could generously be utilized to assure the common survival of humanity, protection of the environment and the unfettered enjoyment of larger freedoms by every individual on this planet Earth.

After all, the founding fathers themselves made a solemn pledge in the Charter

"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

Their vision of a peaceful and harmonious world and peoples' hopes for social advancement and economic prosperity have had a common source: total revulsion against war, destruction and darkness.

Forty-seven years later, reflecting on the intervening years, we note that the world has witnessed more, not fewer, incidents of just and unjust wars, regional conflicts, racial and ethnic strife, acute forms of human suffering, environmental degradation and an unmitigated endangerment of life itself.

Namibia joined other member States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at its Summit in Jakarta in stating that

"the world today is far from being a peaceful, just and secure place. Simmering disputes, violent conflicts, aggression and foreign occupation, interference in the internal affairs of States, policies of hegemony and domination, ethnic strife, religious intolerance, new forms of racism and

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narrowly conceived nationalism are major and dangerous obstacles to harmonious coexistence among States and peoples and have even led to the disintegration of States and societies."

Nuclear conflagration, thank heavens, has not occurred, but the world is far from being a peaceful and secure place. History does indeed repeat itself, at least some of the time, if not most of the time.

Let me add to this assessment one more observation made in Jakarta by an eminent Asian leader. His view, which is consistent with our own, was:

"We must also ensure that the new world order to which the leaders of the industrialised countries often refer does not turn out to be but a new version of the same old patterns of domination of the strong over the weak and the rich over the poor."

For the new world order to be universally acceptable, it should be genuine in its import and distinct from the old unjust and undemocratic order, and it should show a way forward towards greater human solidarity and cooperation.

At this very moment, in South Africa, Somalia, Liberia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and various parts of the former Soviet Union and elsewhere in the world millions of victims languish in perpetual tragedy. This carnage includes innocent and defenceless men, women and children who are killed by guns or hunger. The current state of world affairs hardly encourages confidence and optimism about our common future. One need not be a cynic to hold this view.

My delegation is delighted to see our illustrious Secretary-General occupying a lofty place in the United Nations Organization at this critical time of a changing global environment. It was Africa's pride and Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali's own crowning personal achievement when he was unanimously elected last year as the first African Secretary-General of our

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

Organization. We commend him for his courage and initiative and for the manner in which he has so ably carried out his daunting tasks.

Namibia welcomes the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace". Many of the ideas and recommendations contained in it coincide with those emanating from bodies such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth and others, notably the Nordic States, which some time ago circulated their views on the United Nations reform process.

With this in mind, Namibia is alive to a suggestion made from this rostrum, and endorsed by other delegations, that a special meeting of the Security Council be convened to consider the Secretary-General's proposals. If and when this suggestion is carried out and the proposed meeting takes place, we expect the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council to take into consideration the contributions I have mentioned and to ensure that the intended consultations are inclusive and transparent. There ought to be a careful balance between the need for a renewed commitment to strengthen mechanisms for maintaining world peace and security, on the one hand, and a focus on the burning issues of poverty and other forms of socio-economic injustice, on the other.

In this context, I should like to refer to a bold initiative taken by the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. I have in mind his proposed creation of an institutional mechanism, within the OAU General Secretariat, to deal promptly and effectively with conflict management, prevention and resolution in respect of the eruption of major crises, similar to those now prevailing in Somalia and Liberia, in any African State.

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

There is also a companion set of proposals in a package entitled "The Kampala Document", which is the product of a meeting held last year in Kampala, Uganda, devoted to questions of security, stability, development and co-operation in Africa. These proposals, in our view, are serious and practical innovations by Africans themselves to confront major political and security crises as and when they occur in any part of Africa, and we wholeheartedly endorse them.

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The United Nations Charter itself devotes its chapter VIII to regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with issues such as peace, security and conflict, and encourages appropriate action which is consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. The current Secretary-General himself lamented the fact that the "cold war had impaired the proper activation of this key provision of the Charter and also the fact that", to paraphrase him, rather than helping to resolve regional conflicts super-Powers actually managed to exacerbate them for their own selfish ends.

Quite clearly, there is a linkage between the priority agendas of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the Organization of African Unity, and this is, as a matter of fact, in keeping with the long-standing co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

Mr. President, at this juncture I should like to address a few words to you personally. May I begin by stating that your own unanimous election and the critical role required of your office become not only propitious on the time-scale of the global agenda, as evidenced by the items for discussion during the current session of the Assembly, but equally by affording an ideal opportunity to you boldly and unambiguously to articulate the concerns and aspirations of the poor and developing Members of this Organization.

It gives me great pleasure, therefore, on behalf of the Government and people of Namibia, to extend congratulations to you upon your brilliant election. I have no doubt in my mind that, given your diplomatic skills and vast practical experience, our deliberations will be crowned with success. Our two friendly countries enjoy excellent relations, and I extend best wishes to you.

To your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Shamir S. Shihabi of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I say many congratulations for a job well done, and I should like to wish him great success and happiness in his future endeavours.

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

The long cherished ideal of the universality of our Organization has been further enhanced as more and more new nations have joined its membership. As this world becomes unavoidably interdependent and we collectively realize that the world is truly a global village, increasingly high expections are now being placed in the United Nations. This is yet another reason why the Organization needs to be further revitalized and genuinely democratized.

The world's contemporary challenges stemming from rapidly changing inter-State relations and social problems cannot be adequately dealt with by the United Nations without fundamental institutional and procedural reforms, including the revision of its Charter. It is in this context that Namibia welcomes all the new Members and wishes them well, while assuring them of our desire to promote close co-operation with all of them in a spirit of friendship and peaceful coexistence.

The Rio Earth Summit made the matter abundantly clear: that global economic development and environmental protection go hand in hand. Development must be based on the sustainable utilization of the environment for the sake of this and all future generations.

Namibia's Constitution contains a special provision on this crucial subject. It states:

> "The State shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, inter alia, policies aimed at ... the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and utilization of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future; in particular, the Government shall provide measures against the dumping or recycling of foreign nuclear and toxic waste on Namibian territory."

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Moreover, it further charges the Ombudsman with the duty

> "to investigate complaints concerning the over-utilization of living natural resources, the irrational exploitation of non-renewable resources, the degradation and destruction of ecosystems and failure to protect the beauty and character of Namibia."

Towards implementing environment-friendly policies which aim at sustainable development, the Government had, prior to the Rio Earth Summit, adopted a "Green Plan" for Namibia that outlines a comprehensive framework for development in accordance with sustainable environmental principles. The Plan elaborates on the Government's approach to our ecological challenges and the conscientious management of our natural resources and national assets.

During the days of apartheid colonialism and foreign exploitation, both renewable and non-renewable resources that provided the very basis of the economy were subjected to ruthless plunder mainly for the benefit of foreigners. The Government has taken steps to put an end to this disastrous situation. Many in the developing world, Namibia foremost among them, depend on these resources for daily subsistence, and unless there are going to be alternatives for dealing with debilitating problems such as the debt burden, the foreign exchange dilemma and technological backwardness, many of us are, sad to say, bound to remain in a perpetual state of poverty and underdevelopment. This would in turn mean further degrading the environment and endangering our very existence.

It follows that what is required now is an undertaking to speed up implementation of Agenda 21, adopted in Rio. Its financing, it must be stressed, is not only to assist the developing countries to fight poverty and create jobs but equally to protect the ecosystem itself, which is very vital for the survival of humankind.

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In the same vein, let me add that Namibia, being a dry, semi-desert country, endorses the proposed convention on combating desertification and urges that the preparation of the international convention on desertification be undertaken during the current session.

This brings me to the next topic, namely the current drought and acute situation of hunger and suffering which has afflicted the whole of the southern African subregion. Crop production, livestock farming and our efforts to become food-sufficient and to achieve security have suffered severely. The Government established a National Committee on Drought to ensure, inter alia, better coordination and more efficient delivery of water and food to the most needy sections of the population and the sustenance of the livestock and game. An initial amount of 120 million rand was budgeted for these vital schemes.

Furthermore, in addition to these national efforts, we have also made a special appeal to the international community and, generally speaking, the response has been prompt and helpful, for which Namibia is exceedingly grateful.

A regional effort is under way which involves both the sharing of data and the coordinating of programmes and communication and transport facilities, coupled with the assistance received from the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals around the world.

In this connection, I should like to express a special word of commendation and appreciation to Sir Ketumile Masire, President of the Republic of Botswana, and to the secretariat of Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) for having taken timely and decisive steps

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with a view to sensitizing and mobilizing the international community as to the plight of all our peoples in the subregion and for co-sponsoring an important conference on the situation in Geneva early this year. Of course, we all remain hopeful that there will be early and abundant rains this year, and in all subsequent years, as this will, no doubt, mean saving lives. I thought I should also add here a point which, with each passing day, is becoming more and more clear to all Namibians. This has to do with finding, preserving, planning and distributing water resources, as being perhaps the single most precious primary commodity needed to keep us going and sustain life itself.

The realization that the world is a global village and one market-place with interlocking financial institutions and credit arrangements underlines the internationalization of the world economy.

Namibia, being one of the poorest countries in the South, must continue to raise its voice, in unison with other members of the non-aligned movement and the rest of the developing countries, in favour of the creation of a new and just international economic order. The call for global economic restructuring and reform is a legitimate demand, which should find its place among the top priorities on the agenda of this and other international forums.

The ending of the cold war, as it is alleged, and the emergence of a so-called new world order, characterized in part by the rapprochement of the nuclear Powers, have engendered a peculiar, new culture of economic blackmail and sabotage. Powerful and rich countries have lately tended to tamper with the sovereignty of weaker and poorer nations by using the power of the purse and by laying down some stringent conditions. This is being done supposedly

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to promote democracy, transparency in governance and public accountability - a situation which leads to unilateral and often punitive actions just to prove a point. To us, it unfortunately constitutes an arbitrary and precipitous exercise of power and judgement.

As Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the former Chairman of the South Commission, put it recently on another occasion:

> "these events have had two very important consequences for the South, and all the countries of it. First, they increase the urgency of developing countries building national self-reliance and increasing their economic co-operation in all fields. Secondly, the triumphant West now believes that its success in the cold war gives it the right - as well as the untrammelled power - aggressively to promote its economic and political philosophy throughout the South.
>
> "Directly, and through international finance and trade institutions controlled by the wealthy States, and sometimes by embargoes or even political intervention, the North is therefore forcing developing countries of the South to conform to the patterns it designs.
>
> "At the same time protectionism of different kinds is increasing in the North, and our separate weakness is being used to ride roughshod over our opinions in international negotiations as well as in bilateral South-North discussions."

How can one disagree with this poignant observation?

The non-aligned Movement - which represents the majority of humankind - is an ideal forum for the developing countries within which to plan and act together on issues, including the important issues which preoccupy the United Nations.

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Allow me, once again, to cite Mwalimu's wise and telling words when he asserted thus:

"We need a Movement of the South to speak for the rights of the countries of the South. At present what we have is the Non-Aligned Movement, and - for United Nations negotiating purposes - the Group of 77. Why then is there this talk of the Non-Aligned Movement no longer being needed?"

This, I believe, remains the inescapable reality, whether the world was or is bipolar or unipolar.

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On the situation in South Africa, Namibia expresses support for and solidarity with the liberation movements and all the democratic forces inside that violence-torn neighbouring country. That is why we felt gratified, and participated in the debate, when the issue of the raging violence in South Africa was brought to the Security Council last July.

Our emphasis in our statement was that, now that the United Nations had become engaged in the situation, its presence should be prolonged and the size of its team increased in order to monitor the violence and assist in the transition to a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa. For now, the situation remains explosive and dangerous and, therefore, warrants the continuation of international pressure on the South African Government.

In the meantime, we call upon Chief Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi of the Inkatha Freedom Party to rejoin Comrade Nelson Mandela, President de Klerk and his other compatriots in the negotiations, with the establishment and consolidation of peace as the first prerequisite, and the adoption of a democratic constitution as the next step in the transition.

For the first time in their history, our Angolan neighbours went to the polls on 29 and 30 September, in multiparty elections, to choose a party and candidates who must now install a new Government. It has not been easy, but the sheer will and determination of the voters and monitors alike have confounded many a cynic who believed that it would be impossible to hold free and fair elections in Angola. Namibia sees this as a great victory for the Angolan people, and congratulates them. It also congratulates the leaders of all the political parties on believing in their people's political maturity and accepting the final verdict of the ballot-box. Namibia once again gives its assurance that it will continue to work closely with the Government of the

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day in that sisterly and friendly country, on the basis of friendship and for the benefit of both countries.

The Government of President Chissano and RENAMO finally sat down together in Rome and signed a ceasefire agreement to end the fighting in Mozambique and rebuild the country. We congratulate both President Joaquim Chissano and Mr. Afonso Dhlakama on demonstrating political will and for giving the Mozambican people hope and confidence in their future. They deserve our full and hearty congratulations on this momentous achievement, and we wish them further success as they work for the adoption of a new constitution and for the restoration of peace and order in their country.

Many helpers and interlocutors made this achievement possible. They include the Italian hosts and, in particular, the United Nations. But I should like to commend Presidents Mugabe and Masire for their mediation efforts, which have paid off, to the great happiness of all Africans and their well-wishers around the world. There was one more key player: Mr. Pik Botha, the South African Foreign Minister, who was very active during the final, delicate hours, thereby securing the signing of the cease-fire agreement. Namibia is also pleased to acknowledge his contribution.

As regards the situation in Somalia, Namibia supports the request of President Abdou Diouf of the Republic of Senegal, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), that an international conference on the human disaster in that African country be convened as a matter of the utmost urgency. As the United Nations Secretary-General himself has put it,

> "when it comes to death and misery, no one situation takes priority over another." (A/47/1, para. 116)

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

On the situation in Western Sahara, Namibi supports the principle of self-determination for the Saharan people. To this end, we endorse the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to remove all the obstacles and help resolve disputes about the criteria for eligibility to vote in the referendum, and thus to advance the process.

Likewise, Namibia has always held the view that the political aspirations, and in particular the right to self-determination, of the Palestinian people, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), are at the core of the conflict in the Middle East. Here we include the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The season of peace and dialogue has arrived. In the present circumstances, that is the only viable and sensible game in town. If a face-to-face meeting between the President of Syria and the Prime Minister of Israel will give further impetus to the Middle East peace process and pave the way towards a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement, Namibia will strongly encourage such a historic undertaking within the framework of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Iran and the United Arab Emirates - two sisterly and friendly neighbours - ought not to allow the present misunderstandings to be magnified beyond the confines of their bilateral relations. Rather, they should resolve those misunderstandings through dialogue and by peaceful means.

Happily, Kuwait is going ahead with the consolidation of peace and the reconstruction of the country. Namibia expresses its unswerving solidarity with its Kuwaiti friends, and extends best wishes to them.

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

The carnage in Bosnia and Herzegovina is but the latest instance of man's inhumanity to man. Whether it takes place under the banner of the notorious "ethnic cleansing" or as religious retribution, this ugly tragedy cannot be allowed to continue.

In and around the Korean peninsula, we see steady movement by all the parties concerned in favour of dialogue, while de-emphasizing confrontation and military solutions. This is indeed good news for world peace and security. The reunification of Korea is no longer an unthinkable goal, as the North and the South of that divided nation earnestly continue to regularise high-level meetings and to encourage families to interact freely.

(Mr. Gurirab, Namibia)

We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea, with both of which Namibia maintains excellent diplomatic and cooperative relations, to remain engaged in those critical discussions until an amicable and peaceful solution is found.

Peace and reconciliation in Cambodia are yet to be realized. Inspired by the success of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, we hope and pray that the ongoing United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) operation in that troubled country, too, will be crowned with huge success.

In concluding my statement, I would be remiss if I did not give an update to the General Assembly and the Secretary-General on the outstanding dispute between Namibia and South Africa on Walvis Bay and the offshore islands. As the matter stands now, a joint transitional administration of a limited duration will be established over these territories on 1 November 1992. It will be known as the Joint Administrative Authority and headed by two Chief Executives, one Namibian and one South African. In the meantime, the two Governments will keep the negotiations going on the core issue of re-integration, in accordance with Security Council resolution 432 (1978).

Finally, may I also inform the Assembly that Namibia became the one hundred and fifth member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on 15 September 1992 and also acceded to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and deposited the instruments to this effect with the designated authorities.

Mr. ROMULO (Philippines): It is with special pleasure that the Government and the people of the Philippines extend to you, Sir, their warm felicitations on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at this session. You were one of the most prominent and vigorous advocates

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of freedom and democracy in your country. We in the Philippines watched your struggle with interest and sympathy, and we joined the rest of the world in applauding the triumph of that struggle as the triumph of us all. That triumph led to your elevation to the high office you now hold in your country and, now, to your election as President of the General Assembly. Your election, therefore, is a source of special satisfaction for us.

At the same time, we congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Samir S. Shihabi of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for his excellent leadership in presiding over the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

My delegation also warmly welcomes Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He brings to his arduous and exalted mission decades of experience in and deep insight into the relations among nations and the nature and work of the United Nations. In less than a year in office, Mr. Boutros-Ghali has demonstrated not only an unflinching devotion to the work of our Organization but also a keen sense of the direction it must take in dealing with the great international issues of our time.

Permit me at this point to express the heartfelt appreciation and gratitude of the Philippine Government and of the Filipino people for the generous assistance extended by the members of the world community and international organizations to the hundreds of thousands of victims of floods and mud flows from Mt. Pinatubo, whose fury has described by scientists as "the volcanic eruption of the century". Their dire prediction is that Mt. Pinatubo's mud flows, which have already buried towns and villages and turned the once green fields of Central Luzon into a grey and desolate landscape, will continue its destruction for several more years. As we embark on large-scale relief and rehabilitation efforts in the affected areas, my

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Government would like once more to appeal for assistance from the members of the international community and organizations even as we thank them for the help already extended since Mt. Pinatubo erupted in June 1991.

We hold this session of the General Assembly at a moment in history that has seen the wave of democracy and national freedom sweep the world with astounding and unprecedented rapidity. This is manifested by, among others, the roster of new countries admitted to the United Nations this year - nations newly emerged from the confining and oppressive darkness of totalitarian imperialism: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Krygyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. This list of new States, new Members of the United Nations, reads like a roll of honour in the annals of freedom in our era. We welcome them, as we also do San Marino, to these halls.

We Filipinos take pride in having been early in the ranks of democracy's march in recent history. In 1986, through the exercise of people power, we restored the institutions of democracy in our country. This democratic restoration found both fulfilment and renewed strength in the national elections our people conducted five months ago and in the peaceful transfer of power that resulted from the supreme exercise of the democratic process.

The very fact of that peaceful transfer of power through free elections has affirmed, for all to see, the political stability of our land and, no doubt, contributed to the climate of peace and stability in our region.

In pursuance of national stability and peace, our new leadership, under President Fidel V. Ramos, has embarked on a policy and mission of reconciliation among our people, closing divisions, healing wounds and

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reaching out to all. Among the measures we have taken is the granting of amnesty to those disaffected groups which had taken the path of rebellion - of whatever ideological or religious persuasion they might be, to whatever organizational or ethnic affiliation they might belong.

Elected under the banner of people empowerment, our new leadership has chosen, through its policies, to ride the crest of the wave of economic liberalization that has inexorably rolled across the world and has, in so many nations, improved so many lives in so short a time. We have chosen this path for the same reason others have done - because we believe that it is the best road to sustained economic growth and a better life for our people.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Our new leadership, immediately upon assuming office, committed itself unequivocally to the liberalization of our trading regime and of the rules governing investments in our country. We have removed virtually all foreign-exchange controls, thus facilitating the international movement of currency. The privatization of key public industries proceeds apace. Consistent with the new primacy of commerce and economics in relations between nations, we have placed trade and economic relations at the top of our diplomatic priorities.

Only a few weeks ago, in Jakarta, the capital city of our Indonesian neighbour, we joined the Non-Aligned Movement, in which the Philippines had been an observer for many years. Far from being rendered irrelevant by the end of the cold war, the Non-Aligned Movement, we found, was larger, stronger and even more relevant than ever before. Many of the old divisions in the Movement had closed, and a new cohesion had been found. Moreover, the Movement had turned more of its attention to problems of trade, finance, technology and all those other things that make up economic relations between nations.

The end of the cold war may have greatly diminished the likelihood of worldwide conflict and global cataclysm, but it has given rise to new challenges that are just as threatening for the peoples of many nations and regions, even as many of the old issues remain unresolved.

The weight of their external debt continues to crush the economies of many developing countries, including those countries, like the Philippines, which have made strenuous efforts to pay their debts religiously. Surely, with some imagination and creativity, and a modicum of good will and

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enlightened self-interest, the nations of the world can, together, arrive at some solution that would allow the debtor countries to develop and get out from under the crushing burden of their debt. At the very least, the debtor countries should be given access to their actual and potential markets without any artificial restrictions, to allow them to develop their economies and improve the lives of their peoples while they continue to service their debts from meagre resources.

More and more of the world's nations have adhered ever more strongly to the proposition that economic liberalization is vital to the improvement of industrial productivity and the generation of economic growth. And yet, most ironically, protectionist barriers continue to rise and to hamper the flow of goods and services. The world's peoples call upon the international community, in particular upon the developed countries, to lay aside narrow self-interest and push forward the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations to a speedy and successful conclusion.

The formation of trading blocs in some areas has aroused the apprehension of countries outside those blocs with respect to their potential for artificially diverting trade and investment, diversions damaging to the efficiency of the global economic system. We in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have committed ourselves to the formation of an ASEAN free trade area that would facilitate trade among ourselves. But we are determined to keep ourselves open to world trade, on which our economies depend so much.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Each country has an inalienable right to development. And the United Nations has a paramount role in seeing to it that it is realized. The ongoing restructuring and revitalization process in the economic and social fields should therefore be geared towards the effective discharge of this role by the United Nations system.

The continuing scourge of poverty, the rapid increase in population, the uneven rate of economic growth among countries and the asymmetry in the economic and social structures of nations, together with the dazzling advances in transportation and communication, have given rise to a new phenomenon of our times: the massive migration of labour. As one of the largest sources of this migration, the Philippines is convinced that it is now time for the international community to deal with this phenomenon no longer in haphazard and isolated ways, but on a planned and strategic basis and on an international scale.

In so doing, we would do well to heed the appeal of the Secretary-General to accord deeper understanding and respect to the rights and needs of the more vulnerable groups of society. A substantial part of the migration of labour is the thousands of young women from many developing countries who venture forth to more affluent countries in search of a better life for themselves and their families, only to fall victim to unspeakable abuse, in many cases to violence, sometimes ending in death, simply because they are women. Roaming the streets of the world are 145 million children - homeless, hungry, neglected, in most cases victims of abuse and mistreatment by adults. Thousands of the disabled and the ageing, particularly in the developing countries, are cast away, stripped of their dignity, from the mainstream of society.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The untrammelled population growth in many regions, the profligate use of the Earth's resources and the pollution of the land, water and air have severely damaged the Earth's life-sustaining ecology in many places, threatening the livelihoods of farmers and fishermen and the health of everyone. It was therefore with a keen sense of hope and high expectations that the Philippines participated in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro last June. At that Conference, the collective will of the international community was marshalled at the highest level of leadership on behalf of the sustainable development of our Earth and its resources. The Philippines applauds its considerable achievements and remains committed to its goals and ideals, as embodied in Agenda 21, the implementation of which requires adequate new and additional financial resources.

To carry out on a national scale the objectives set forth in Agenda 21, my President has created the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development, which counts non-governmental organizations and, particularly, the youth among its members. I am also pleased to announce that, in observance of the International Year for the World's Indigenous People, the Philippines will host in April next year a Global Youth Earth Summit - or Global YES - in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme's Global Youth Forum and with the full endorsement and support of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the International Labour Organisation. I appeal to the world to support this undertaking.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The cold war's end has lifted a great pall of global threat from over the Earth and closed a fundamental division in the international community. It has thus opened new vistas of hope for peace and global security, directly leading to major advances in some of the world's hitherto intractable conflicts: Afghanistan, Cambodia, the Middle East, Central America, South Africa. Nevertheless, intra-regional and intra-national conflicts continue to ravage people's lives and homes.

The end of super-Power confrontation and the dissolution of empires and blocs have freed nations and dismantled tyrannies. They have also unleashed age-old hostilities between antagonistic groups and released them to erupt in tragic violence. These conflicts, new and old, have taken various forms and dimensions.

In the Middle East, movement in the peace process has given rise to new, albeit modest, hopes. However, hope must be tempered still, as the basic cause of conflict - the denial of a homeland and sovereignty to the Palestinian people - remains unresolved.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

In South Africa, the institutions of apartheid have been dismantled, a hopeful development that can be attributed in no small measure to the resolute and patient efforts of the United Nations and the international community. We are heartened that the stalled negotiations on the future of that country may finally get back on track with the expected resumption of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa. In Somalia, intertribal warfare conspires with the cruelties of nature to inflict upon the people of that unhappy land death by violence or starvation. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, specifically its Muslim population, are subjected to the barbarity of ethnic cleansing and the horrors of fratricidal war while the international community helplessly looks on. Similar forms, if not similar degrees, of ethnic violence have erupted in some places in the former Soviet Union.

In our own region of South-East Asia, in Cambodia, a peace agreement painstakingly worked out by the United Nations, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), other interested Governments and the Cambodian factions themselves has provided for and led to the mounting of the largest peace-keeping operation of the United Nations and the assumption of one of its gravest responsibilities, the United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia, to which the Philippines has contributed a contingent of policemen and naval observers. However, one of the factions has, of late, chosen not to participate further in the peace process until its conditions, some of which go beyond the terms of the Paris peace Agreement, are met. It is now the responsibility of the international community to ensure that the fabric of imminent peace does not unravel and to place the peace process back on track.

Conflicting claims in the South China Sea have given rise to acute concern among the countries involved and other States with interests in the

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

area. Last July the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN issued in Manila the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea, calling on all claimants to settle their disputes peacefully, pledging to embark on cooperative endeavours in the area and inviting all parties concerned to subscribe to the Declaration. Dialogues have been taking place in the region involving officials and academicians from the claimant States and other interested parties. It is our hope that these dialogues will help to avert misunderstanding and conflict and eventually lead to the day when this vast, vital and strategic portion of the sea can be transformed from an area of incipient tension into a region of enduring peace and cooperation. All these fall squarely under the purposes and principles of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in South-East Asia, which the signatories, including the Philippines, are requesting the General Assembly to endorse at this session.

Thus, even as the world welcomes the cold war's end and the march of freedom and democracy across the earth, in the relations among nations old wounds fester, break out and recur and new ones are opened. And yet hopes run higher than they have ever done since the last great war. These hopes are focused especially on the new possibilities for the United Nations in its mission of preventing war, making peace, keeping the peace and building for peace. In this new era of opportunity it is both possible and imperative for the United Nations to discharge the role envisioned for it by the Charter as the primary keeper of peace and security in the world.

It is therefore extremely fitting that in his first report on the work of the Organization our new Secretary-General dwells almost exclusively on this role of the United Nations and the opportunities opened for it by the historic changes of recent times.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The Philippines welcomes the Secretary-General's report, "An Agenda for Peace - Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping," and is studying it with great attention. We commend it to the world for serious consideration, for it seeks to bring the United Nations back to its roots as an organization with an effective capacity to make peace and keep the peace. The report is filled with wise, timely and practical prescriptions, and I should like to single out a few.

We support the Secretary-General's call for an enlarged and more effective role for the International Court of Justice. We join the Secretary-General in reaffirming the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, as approved by the General Assembly. We endorse his recognition of the need to relieve the economic difficulties of States that are affected by sanctions imposed on another State under Article 41 of the Charter.

We commend for especially close consideration the Secretary-General's bold proposals for giving life to Chapter VII of the Charter, particularly Article 42, which authorizes the Security Council to take military action to maintain or restore international peace and security, and Article 43, which mandates Members of the United Nations to place armed forces and facilities on call for this purpose.

Granting the United Nations increased power and greater authority for peace-keeping and enforcement action would gain stronger support from the international community if the Security Council could function with a greater degree of democracy than heretofore. Why, for example, should a region with approximately 15 per cent of the world's population and 23 per cent of the total membership of the United Nations have 40 per cent representation in the Security Council this year, with three having the power of veto?

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Clearly, that is a legitimate question. However, the composition of the Security Council is but one of the provisions in the Charter that could stand improvement. My delegation appreciates current efforts to restructure and revitalize the economic and social sectors of the United Nations and to reform both the General Assembly and the Secretariat. We note, however, that such efforts are often limited by a hesitation to review the United Nations Charter itself.

Addressing the work of the Special Committee on the Charter and the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the then Philippine Foreign Minister, General Carlos P. Romulo, said:

"At no time in history has it been more clear that the many and closely interrelated global problems that beset us will not yield to peacemeal and national solutions. The paramount importance of the United Nations as the capstone of human society has been reaffirmed with great force by the momentous events even of this single year. The design of a new world economic order, the mobilizing of world agriculture, a global approach to population problems, the equitable redistribution of world economic resources, the achievement of disarmament and peace - all require an ever more effective and more efficient world Organization.

"For these reasons, it is more than ever appropriate that we are continuing our consideration of the improvement of the United Nations itself. The centrality of the United Nations is obvious and inescapable. The increasing value of the United Nations is undoubted. But its rate of adaptation to rapidly moving world affairs is doubted; its adequacy to perform the functions thrust upon it by its Members, and simply by the urgent course of world history, is doubted.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

"When we began this discussion in 1970, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of our world Organization, the effort seemed pertinent enough. But now, as we continue, the accelerating pace of change in the world has already caught up with us and threatens to pass us by. The mechanisms of the United Nations are increasingly creaky and primitive in light of the task of plenary management that the Organization is increasingly called upon to assume. While the prescience of the founders was remarkable, and they succeeded in designing a flexible and adaptable Organization with a Charter of enduring worth, at the same time it was wholly impossible for them to anticipate the speed with which events would carry us into the interdependent global age and the requirements that would be placed on our world body."

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

General Romulo, who happened to be my father and one of the founders of the United Nations, made these remarks in 1974. He might as well be making them today. I do not wish to state the obvious, but I know that my father's message rings loud and clear in this Hall. Let us now proceed to rectify the omissions of the past.

Towards this end, the Philippine delegation submits that the time has come for the United Nations to avail itself of the provisions of Article 109 regarding the convening of a General Conference to review the Charter. My delegation will consult with like-minded Members in the coming year with a view to definitively addressing this proposal, specifically through a resolution calling for such a review conference, which, according to the Charter itself, should have been placed on the agenda of the General Assembly 10 years after its adoption in 1945.

We are only three years shy of the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. Its celebration, we believe, would be further enhanced by the adoption and implementation of such a resolution. Through it, we hope to contribute to the noble work of making the United Nations a truly effective instrument, as the signatories envisioned it to be, for saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and for promoting "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". The confluence of historic events in our time presents us with a unique opportunity to fulfil the mandate from our founders. Let us prove ourselves worthy of their trust.

Mr. NDOLO AYAH (Kenya): First of all, let me join the other representatives who have spoken before me in congratulating you warmly, Sir, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly. Your election to this high office is not only proof of the confidence which the Assembly has in you, but a great honour

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

as well to your country, Bulgaria. We are confident that, under your able leadership, our deliberations will be steered to a successful conclusion.

I also wish to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Samir Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, for the great diplomatic skills with which he successfully led the forty-sixth session.

We are happy to welcome the several Members that joined our Organization in the past year. With their admission, the United Nations has moved once again closer to the realization of the principle of universality of membership. We are encouraged by their commitment to the principles and objectives of the Charter and we look forward to working closely with them in the days ahead in creating a better world for mankind through this Organization. Their admission comes at a very significant moment in the history of the United Nations, a time when our Organization is undergoing revitalization and reorganization and is poised to meet the new challenges in the rapidly changing international scene.*

The successes of the United Nations and the important contribution that it is expected to make towards the maintenance of international peace and security will in no small measure depend on the efforts of our new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. We commend him for his timely report, "An Agenda for Peace", in which he analyses and offers pragmatic recommendations on ways of strengthening and making more efficient the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping.

Security based on the old theory of deterrence has failed to guarantee mankind a world without the threat of war and nuclear holocaust. Kenya

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* Mr. Phoofolo (Lesotho), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

believes that peace is not merely the absence of war but the absence of the threat of war or of the use of force in international relations and in all spheres of life as well. The end of super-Power rivalry and the demise of the cold-war era offer the world a rare opportunity not only to reorganize international relations but also to create a peaceful atmosphere devoid of nuclear threat. Positive steps have been taken in Geneva in the Conference on Disarmament through the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention. Kenya is happy to be among the many States which have sponsored a draft resolution, to be placed before this Assembly at the current session, on chemical and bacteriological weapons under the Convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.

As important as all these developments are, Kenya still holds to the view that a comprehensive test ban is the only viable way of stopping the momentum of the nuclear arms race. It is the most appropriate tool for practical arms control policies geared towards preventing further arms escalation. In this regard, the accession by China and France to the non-proliferation Treaty is a welcome step in the right direction.

Kenya welcomed without reservation the collapse of the bipolar structure of the cold war. However, the consequences of the change have been devastating to some and catastrophic to others. One thing is clear. The changes, although desired and necessary, have come in too rapidly for most. Consequently, instead of being a triumph for democracy, the changes now present a serious challenge, not only for democracy and the survival of the democratic institutions they were meant to strengthen, but also a severe test of the will and the capacity of the United Nations and its institutions to respond effectively to the resultant crises.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

Somalia is a particularly distressing example. In the words of our Secretary-General, as contained in his report of 11 September 1992 on the work of this Organization:

> "Somalia poses a particularly difficult challenge to the United Nations. A means must be found of responding to the urgent and overwhelming needs of a population increasingly desperate in the face of widespread hunger, the absence of national administration, almost complete destruction of basic infrastructure and acute insecurity." (A/47/1, para. 145)

As a neighbour to Somalia, Kenya has had to bear more than its fair share of Somali refugees, now standing at well over half a million people. Close to 6 million out of Somali's population of 7 million people are in serious distress, with some 2 million condemned to certain death before this human tragedy is eventually brought to a conclusion.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

We thank the Secretary-General and his team for their tireless efforts in putting together a comprehensive and multifaceted programme of action covering humanitarian relief, the consolidation of a cease-fire, the reduction of organized violence and national reconciliation. The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ambassador Jan Eliasson, has also done commendably well in coordinating United Nations assistance to Somalia. Kenya still remains ready to offer the necessary facilities to United Nations agencies, and inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to assist Somalia.

While humanitarian assistance is of the utmost priority in the present circumstances, we in Kenya have not lost sight of the paramount importance of the need for a round table. There is absolutely no alternative to dialogue. My President, His Excellency Daniel Arap Moi, has constantly reminded the Somali leaders that they must put the interests of the Somali people before their own narrow and personal interests. Kenya will do whatever it can, along with its neighbours, to assist all Somali factions, without exclusion, to come together and discuss a durable solution to this tragedy.

Elsewhere in Africa there have been encouraging trends of reconciliation and amicable solutions to ethnic or ideological conflicts, which have retarded progress for decades. We salute the people of Mozambique and Angola for opting for dialogue to solve their differences.

We also look forward to a peaceful solution, at long last, to the problems of Cambodia and divided Korea, and support the initiatives in Central America to solve their problems through the regional approach, as provided for in the Charter.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

The situation in the Middle East is still far from settled. However we express cautious optimism at the current rounds of talks initiated by Secretary of State James Baker, involving the most important protagonists in the Middle East conflict, the Palestinians.

The developments in South Africa are also of great encouragement to us. We look forward to the resumption of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) talks in order to accelerate movement towards genuine democracy in that country.

This session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time of increased globalization of the world economy with promising opportunities for all countries, rich and poor. Unfortunately the benefits accruing from this globalization are not being uniformly distributed. The economies of the developing countries are characterized by a mounting debt burden, negative balance-of-payments positions, declining investments, reduced external creditworthiness, and a general backsliding in economic development.

The flow of international development finance to developing countries, both official and commercial, has continued to decline at a time when more is needed. This has resulted in the net outflow of resources from the developing to the developed countries. In order to reverse this negative trend, the developed countries and the international financial institutions need to intensify their efforts to increase substantially the rate of financial flows to the developing countries on a continuous and assured basis.

Donor countries which have not done so should make every effort to reach the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product in official development assistance to the developing countries as set out in the United Nations International Development Strategy. Aid conditionalities and

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

cross-conditionalities imposed on the developing countries by a number of donors should be lifted. They are unrealistically stringent and counter-productive. There is, therefore, urgent need for donors to re-examine their policies in international cooperation in order to avoid actions that hurt the already debt-ridden economies of the recipient countries.

The external debt crisis of the developing countries is being exacerbated by volatile exchange rates and currency fluctuations, the collapse of commodity prices, a general deterioration in the terms of trade of the debtor countries and the domestic financial and economic policies of the creditor countries. In an effort to lower inflation the creditor countries have adopted measures which have reduced opportunities for the exports of the developing countries and led to higher interest rates, further jeopardizing the ability of the debtor countries to meet their debt obligations.

Kenya feels that any meaningful solution to the debt crisis must address the real causes of the problem with a view to obtaining a durable solution. We welcome the efforts taken by some members of the donor community to reduce or cancel the debts owed by the developing countries. An effective and lasting solution to the debt problem of developing countries can be achieved only through measures directed towards the revitalization of the economic growth and development of the developing countries.

Trade protectionism and the failure by the developed countries totally to observe international trade practices have also contributed to reduced market opportunities for the exports of the developing countries. Protectionism, along with subsidies, has adversely affected the ability of the developing countries, particularly those in Africa, to earn badly needed foreign exchange and has resulted in developing countries losing some $500 billion a year.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

That is 10 times more than the amount of foreign assistance granted to these countries. The situation is worsened by the steeply declining prices of commodities on which many developing countries are highly dependent. Since the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement in 1989, for example, coffee-producing countries have lost more than $10 billion.

In order to reverse this unfavourable trend, the developed countries should dismantle protectionism in world trade and ensure that inward-looking regionalism and economic blocs do not undermine the multilateral trading system. There is urgent need for an early and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) multilateral trade negotiations.

The liberalization programmes supported by the donor community, especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, should balance between promoting a market for the industrialized countries and making the exports of developing countries more competitive in the world market. These programmes should also support processing in the developing countries to give their products a higher added value in order to fetch more in international markets.

Some developing countries, including Kenya, with the support of the IMF and the World Bank, are implementing structural adjustment programmes. While our countries accept the objectives of these structural adjustments, the rates and sometimes the methods of implementation advocated by the donor community, particularly the IMF and the World Bank, are out of step with our political, economic or social capacity to absorb them. Kenya is convinced that the sustainability of these programmes cannot be guaranteed unless they are compatible with political and social situations in the recipient countries.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

Kenya believes that peace, security and stability cannot be assured in the face of the abject poverty in which millions of people in developing countries live. We fully endorse the position of developing countries members of the Group of 77 that the eradication of poverty constitutes a major challenge at the present time. That must be the goal in the revitalization of growth and in sustainable development in developing countries. We equally support and endorse the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council at its 1992 substantive session that the General Assembly should convene a world summit for social development in 1995. Such a conference would contribute to the important objective of putting people at the centre of development and international cooperation. Eradication of poverty is a national objective in Kenya and every effort is being made towards that end.

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

Kenya, like many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, has had its share of drought and of the shortage of food, which have been compounded by the refugee problem. The persistent critical economic and social problems in Africa, coupled with the debt-burden, declining prices of commodities, vagaries of climate and weather conditions, environmental degradation, population increase, and social as well as political effects of structural adjustment, have all added to the deterioration of living standards and have frustrated efforts for economic recovery. Almost 40 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are currently faced with the threat of starvation.

The Government of Kenya is most appreciative of the response of the international community and of the bilateral assistance from friendly countries, in the face of the severe drought and crop failure that gripped our country. The United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs launched a Special Appeal for Kenya, alongside the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa. I wish to convey the thanks and gratitude of my country to the Secretary-General for this timely action and particularly for releasing to the United Nations Children's Fund $2 million from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund for the provision of water, emergency drugs, vaccines and shelter in the north and north-eastern areas of Kenya. We should like to make a further appeal for continued assistance in view of the overwhelming flood of refugees and the effect of the drought in Kenya.

The holding of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio this year was a clear indication of the concern of humanity for the state of the global environment. It emphasized the fact that the continuing deterioration of the environment is a serious threat to the survival of the human race and the planet Earth. The agreements reached in

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

Rio represent a remarkable achievement by any standard despite the fact that they did not meet all our hopes and expectations in all areas. None the less, what is gratifying is that the results of the Rio Earth Summit, contained in the Rio Declaration and in Agenda 21, provide the basis for a new global partnership, embracing the rich and the poor, North and South, East and West.

Noteworthy is the fact that, for the first time, the world community gave its united attention to the process of desertification, one of the problems facing the African continent and indeed Kenya. This process has given rise to untold levels of poverty and it is time we had an international legal instrument that would focus on this scourge. It is therefore pleasing to note that the Rio Conference called attention to the need to start work on an international convention on desertification, with special reference to Africa.

In spite of what was accomplished at Rio, we cannot afford to be complacent. Much more needs to be done. The road from Rio will be longer and perhaps more challenging than the road to Rio. Programmes need to be implemented and treaties put into force and strengthened.

While Kenya is ready to pursue the objectives of sustainable development, we have to emphasize that a positive move on the part of developed countries is needed in the implementation of provisions regarding new and additional resources and technical assistance, as well the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, to enable developing countries to play their role. Indeed, at Rio, the developed countries reaffirmed their commitment to reach the accepted target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development aid to augment their aid programmes. While this commitment is commendable, Kenya's view is that specific commitments should be spelt out, since the success and implementation of Agenda 21 will depend very heavily on

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

the availability of finance. We also wish to underscore that the implementation of sustainable development will be futile if developed countries and financial institutions use financial considerations as an excuse for interfering in the internal affairs of developing countries or as an opportunity to introduce conditionalities.

The establishment of the Commission for Sustainable Development is important since it will provide a focal point of intergovernmental decision-making to effect the integration of the environmental and developmental strategies contained in Agenda 21. Kenya believes that the only way for the new Commission to be most effective in implementing Agenda 21 would be for the General Assembly to resist any organizational modalities and mandates that would create unnecessarily costly and large bureaucratic machinery. The Commission should operate as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council within recognized rules of procedure and should be elaborated in the context of the ongoing revitalization and rationalization of the Council. The policy responsibilities of the Commission must be well defined to avoid conflicts with other bodies. It should be both future- and development-oriented, providing a forum for the review, further development and updating of Agenda 21 in the light of future economic, financial, technological, legal and other developments.

At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/164, accepting the idea of convening a United Nations conference on human settlements, possibly in 1997, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the item. My delegation fully supports this decision, which would offer a unique opportunity to evaluate and strengthen the progress of Habitat, taking into account the fact that urbanization is one of the fundamental

(Mr. Ndolo Ayah, Kenya)

environmental problems that we cannot afford to overlook.

Before concluding, let me comment briefly on the Decade of International Law. At its forty-fifth session, the General Assembly declared the 1990s to be the United Nations Decade of International Law. Respect and adherence by all States to the principles and norms of international law would lead us to a more orderly world in which disputes that may arise can be resolved by peaceful means. All of us must, therefore, exert every effort to ensure that the aims of the Decade are promoted and that meaningful programmes are adopted so that the Decade may become a reality.

It would also be very opportune if, in this Decade of International Law, the world were to witness not only the coming into force of the Convention on the Law of the Sea, but also its universal acceptance as the comprehensive legal order for the world seas. We therefore applaud the Secretary-General in these efforts aimed at making this a reality and we wish him well and success. We must, however, be very careful that universal acceptance of the Convention will not mean unravelling its core principle, which is that the high seas and the resources therein are and shall be exploited for the common heritage of all mankind.

Mr. AITMATOV (Kyrgyzstan) (interpretation from Russian): Allow me to express my sincere congratulations to the President of the current General Assembly on his election. I should also like to wish every success to the Secretary-General in his work.

This session of the General Assembly is the first one for Kyrgyzstan, as it is for other new United Nations Member States, and provides us with a unique opportunity to introduce ourselves us to the world community and to express our vision of future cooperation with the organization.

Kyrgyzstan emerged as an independent State at a turning point in world history. The collapse of totalitarianism and profound geopolitical changes in the territory of the former Soviet Union enabled my Republic to seize this historic opportunity to establish itself as an independent State. Less than a month ago, we celebrated the first anniversary of our independence.

From the very outset, we saw no other alternative in using the right of independent choice we obtained than the establishment of a pluralistic democracy as the only means of creating a decent life for the individual by ensuring political, economic and spiritual freedoms.

The difficult process of creating a democratic legal State, strengthening inter-ethnic harmony and social accord and building the basis for a market economy is under way in Kyrgyzstan. Our criteria are the highest international standards for ensuring human rights and freedoms, and we are pursuing their implementation in all areas of political and legislative activity. These standards are set forth in the draft of our new Constitution, which our Parliament is soon to discuss. In the near future, Kyrgyzstan will also adhere to major international agreements on human rights.

We appreciate the friendly view taken abroad of the democratic changes under way in Kyrgyzstan.

(Mr. Aitmatov, Kyrgyzstan)

Kyrgyzstan today is recognized by 107 countries the world over, and diplomatic relations have been established with more than 50 of them. It has become a member of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other international and regional institutions.

Kyrgyzstan is open to sound, mutually beneficial relations and ready for partnership with those countries which share our ideals of freedom and democracy.

We attach great importance to maintaining cooperation within the Commonwealth of Independent States. The meeting of Heads of State of the Commonwealth, which took place in Bishkek recently, might help strengthen integration, but we recognize the different situations involved and the various approaches taken to this integration.

On the international scene, Kyrgyzstan will act as peace-loving, neutral, non-nuclear State. As such, our Republic is ready to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to tackle other issues related to the strengthening of strategic and military security.

Our meeting takes place at a crucial turning point for the United Nations. The process of searching for the most adequate and appropriate principles for the Organization, in keeping with the new, changing realities of a post-confrontation world, is now under way.

Distortions caused by totalitarianism in the sphere of interstate and interethnic relations have led to emergence of crisis zones in the vast area stretching from the former Yugoslavia to Central Asia.

We support the ideas put forward in the report of the Secretary-General, "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of

(Mr. Aitmatov, Kyrgyzstan)

preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. We believe that in order to prevent and settle conflicts, it is necessary to apply within the framework of international law all existing mechanisms of the United Nations and the CSCE. The main thing is the timeliness and adequacy of the steps undertaken. Preventive diplomacy and timely reaction should be given top priority in all peace-keeping efforts.

We are especially concerned over maintaining stability in Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan advocates constructive steps and a regional orientation for maintaining peace and stability in the region.

In this connection, we were greatly interested by a proposal for organizing a forum on interaction and confidence in Asia similar to the all-European process put forward yesterday by the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Mazarbayev, in his speech to the General Assembly.

This forum, as we see it, could help to adapt to Asian realities the vast experience accumulated by world and European organizations in confidence-building measures and mechanisms for collective security.

Kyrgyzstan is now passing through a harsh economic crisis, the reasons for which are evident and well-known. The situation has been aggravated by natural disasters. On two occasions this year an earthquake and a flood have led to the loss of human lives and caused enormous material damage. Obviously, it would be difficult for us to overcome all the problems of the transitional period by ourselves.

It is therefore difficult to overestimate the importance of the economic, financial, technical and humanitarian assistance provided us by the world community. The cooperation of the United Nations and its specialized agencies with a large group of countries that became full-fledged members only recently

(Mr. Aitmatov, Kyrgyzstan)

is especially valuable both from the standpoint of solving their problems and with respect to reforms under way in the Organization. In general terms, this relates to the effectiveness of the United Nations and of its system.

We appreciate the activities of the United Nations specialized agencies, which, through an adequate assessment of our status and situation, are active in setting up programmes in our country. The upcoming opening in Bishkek of a United Nations representative office will promote the speedy integration of Kyrgyzstan into international economic, technical, scientific and humanitarian cooperation.

Our Republic became a United Nations member at a time of renewal and reforms. We are in favour of practical steps aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of this Organization as the key factor in establishing a new world order.

I take this opportunity to confirm that Kyrgyzstan will adhere strictly to the provisions of the Charter and will make its contribution to the activities of the Organization.

Mr. CARIAS ZAPATA (Honduras) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to convey to Mr. Ganev the most sincere congratulations of the Government of Honduras on his well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. Through him we should also like to extend our best wishes to the Bulgarian people, who, like other peoples of Eastern Europe, are today, after much effort and self-sacrifice, helping to keep alive the flame of freedom, democracy and progress in that continent.

To the new Members of our Organization, we extend a most cordial greeting. We are fully convinced that through the United Nations we shall be able to establish growing links of friendship and cooperation.

Our Organization is grounded on principles of equality, shared responsibilities, and the promotion of international peace and security. We hope that Serbia and Montenegro will best achieve those objectives by meeting the legitimate expectations of the international community that an end will be put to the war, persecution and intolerance in the countries of former Yugoslavia, and that they will be able to become Members of this great family of nations.

Moreover, in a world of changing realities, one which is none the less marked by its attachment to universality and peaceful coexistence, my Government, like other Central American countries, believes that we should open the way for the Republic of China, with more than 20 million inhabitants and authorities established in Taipei, to participate in the work of our Organization and its specialized agencies as that country does in various regional forums and international mechanisms. Membership in the United Nations does not constitute diplomatic recognition of sovereignty, and there have been and are precedents in the history of the United Nations for the simultaneous presence of countries which are in search of their historical

(Mr. Carias Zapata, Honduras)

unity but which, while they remain separated, have not been denied the opportunity to make their contribution to the complex fabric of international relations and obligations which bring together the peoples of the Earth through the United Nations.

We are beginning a new era in the life of this Organization. For us, the "Agenda for Peace" of our distinguished Secretary-General is a noteworthy effort embodying both vision and realism that will enable us to make progress in forging a more secure and prosperous world. The Government of Honduras warmly supports the proposals on preventive diplomacy and on strengthening the logistical and financial capacity of the United Nations for peace-keeping and for peace-building when peace is threatened, when peace has been breached, or when the persistence of situations of confrontation make peace vulnerable.

In accordance with those aims, Honduras also urges greater support for and use of the international organs for the legal settlement of disputes such as the International Court of Justice, which has only recently handed down a judgment providing a definitive solution to a long-standing border dispute between El Salvador and Honduras. The peoples and Governments of both countries intend to comply in good faith with this judgement.

Honduras has also decided to lend its armed forces and police for peace-keeping missions and is at present satisfactorily participating in the conciliation mission in Western Sahara of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

With the end of a bipolar world and of the cold war, the terrible threat of a nuclear holocaust has dissipated. However, atomic weapons and other powerful weapons of mass destruction continue to overfill the arsenals of large and medium-sized Powers. My country therefore urges those who possess nuclear weapons to pursue, and as appropriate to initiate, serious and

(Mr. Carias Zapata, Honduras)

verifiable programmes for the reduction and destruction of such weapons, and the dismantling of possible vehicles for them. We also urge that the non-proliferation Treaty system be made more general and strengthened, with guarantees of verification; this applies also to the regional systems such as the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We shall also join in the broad movement that is being generated at this session towards seeking and achieving the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.

In the Persian Gulf, the reasons for the vigorous response by the international community in defence of the sovereignty and legitimate rights of Kuwait still exist in several respects. More than ever before, the United Nations should redouble its efforts to bring about faithful compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council ensuring an end to threats of aggression and guaranteeing for the countries of the Gulf an environment of peace and a future free of coercion and uncertainty.

In the Middle East, in southern Africa and in Cambodia, processes of peace and reconciliation continue to move forward. Candidly acknowledging past injustices, trusting in the mediating efforts of the United Nations, and convinced that the fruits of peace are beneficial to their populations, the leaders of all the parties involved in these conflicts should now more than ever before strive to bring about equitable solutions to the differences that separate them, in order to guarantee a speedy restoration in their respective regions of stable and secure conditions of good neighbourliness.*

The signing of the Chapultepec Peace Agreements in January this year between the Government of El Salvador and representatives from the insurgent

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* The President returned to the Chair.

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movement has brought an end to armed confrontation in our neighbouring country and has opened the way for a complete reconciliation in the spirit of freedom and democracy for the Salvadorian people. Honduras associated itself in the well-deserved tribute paid to former Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar for his mediating efforts. We have given and shall continue to give our full support to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in the fulfilment of the various stages of the peace agreement, including demobilization of formerly opposed forces and integration into civil and political life of the insurgents in a framework of complete legality.

With peace in El Salvador, Central America, under the sign of democracy, is returning to the path of integration and development. Our countries are aware of the countless challenges posed by the insufficiency of our productive infrastructure, poverty and inequalities. But we also know that with dedication and vision, and especially with unity, we shall be able to overcome them.

That is why the Tegucigalpa Protocol (A/46/829, annex III) of 13 December 1991 has entered into force, establishing a system for Central America integration which, working in the summit meetings of Presidents of the Central American isthmus, will impart force and impetus to a broad movement towards integration. Honduras hopes that the ever-stronger voice of Central America will be heard and that our region, a region of peace, democracy, freedom and development, will join and participate actively in the new forms of global interdependence that are taking shape on the eve of a new millenium.

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For Honduras, an essential part of this integrated vision is the formation and implementation of national, regional and international strategies to fight poverty and to overcome long-standing problems that strike hardest at children, women and the elderly.

If we justly aspire to economic development, and to growing expansion of trade in goods and services originating from all continents, we should likewise aspire to, and indeed make possible, real improvement in the quality of life of the inhabitants of our countries. Enhanced social well being should not be conceived of as a generous remedy that may prove insufficient to the communities receiving it, but rather as a joint undertaking to facilitate, through international cooperation, conditions for vocational training and better access to the opportunities that can be provided by open and growing economies.

On 12 December 1991, in Central America, the Heads of State and Government of the seven countries of the isthmus assumed that very commitment, and, in the presence of various distinguished figures and executives of the United Nations and regional organizations, initiated a coordinated programme of human development with goals, objectives and resources defined for the present decade to culminate in the year 2000.

Those initiatives of our subregion are universal in conception. That is why Honduras, like Chile and other friendly countries, will continue to give impetus to, and participate in, the appropriate preparations for and holding of a world conference on social and human development that may serve as a forum for reflection and initiatives to effectively set in motion international measures and policies in this respect.

In an ever more integrated world, our countries, which share not only a rich cultural heritage exemplified by the common use of a single language, but

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also a democratic and modern vision of international relations, are naturally seeking to strengthen our links of fraternal friendship and our presence in the world. Those are the fundamental reasons that led us to constitute the Ibero-American Conference, which, following its founding declaration in Guadalajara, signed in July 1991 by the Heads of State and Government of the Hispanic-American countries, Brazil, Spain and Portugal, has now formally been constituted.

Within the Ibero-American Conference, as a mechanism for interaction and cooperation, we have been designing programmes of mutual benefit primarily in the fields of education, exchanges of programmes via satellite, the creation of an indigenous fund and the launching of a broad programme of exchanges of scholars and researchers.

The Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Madrid this year also gave support to growing and leading involvement by our countries in a world programme of human development.

Maintenance of an open multilateral trading system is of vital importance to the expansion of world trade and the economic development of all countries. For that reason we must join our efforts to bring about the speedy culmination, on satisfactory terms, of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. Stagnation of the negotiating process would have very serious consequences for world trade and would affect prospects and the structural programmes that many developing countries have undertaken at the cost of great sacrifice to find our proper place in the trend towards large trading blocs.

This year there has been a dramatic fall in the prices of commodities essential to our economies. This leads us to stress the need to bring about better regulation of conditions of access guaranteeing the growth of sales of our competitive products at fair prices.

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In this context we must also, in our judgement, strengthen the transfer of technology for industrial development and more flexible terms in financing the modernization of industrial plant in developing countries.

The urgent need to share responsibilities and to act together to guarantee global economic stability independently of the economic and political power of each nation, together with the growing convergence of views as to global priorities, were clearly and positively demonstrated at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro.

The Government of Honduras takes great satisfaction from the common reflection on urgent environmental problems initiated at that conference, and we reiterate our support for the principles adopted by it and for Agenda 21, which comprehensively encompasses a whole programme of action in the environmental sphere and for sustainable development.

We must persevere in this direction. The deterioration of nature must be halted. Together we can design conservation strategies that allow for the rational use of natural resources to meet the needs of employment and the economic growth of our populations.*

The new strategy of peace is also necessarily a new strategy of development. Only by growing together can we survive; only by pooling our efforts can we secure for future generations a better world in harmony and concord.

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* The President returned to the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: SECOND REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/47/250/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT: I now draw the attention of representatives to the second report of the General Committee (A/47/250/Add.1), concerning a request submitted by Pakistan for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item as well as a request submitted by the Secretary-General also for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item.

In paragraph 1 (a) of the report, the General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "Emergency assistance to Pakistan".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include in its agenda the additional item entitled "Emergency assistance to Pakistan"?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: In paragraph 1 (b) of the report, the General Committee also recommends to the Assembly that this item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I also take it that the item should be considered with priority because of its urgent character?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: In this connection, I should like to inform representatives that this item will be considered on Wednesday, 7 October, in the morning, after we heard the last speaker in the general debate for that meeting.

Next, I should like to draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 2 (a) of the report A/47/250/Add.1.

The General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include in its agenda the additional item entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991".

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: In paragraph 2 (b) of the report, the General Committee also recommends that the item be allocated to the Fifth Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts that recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

I should now like to draw the General Assembly's attention to the fact that, at its 3rd plenary meeting, the Assembly allocated item 105, "Programme planning", to the Fifth Committee, on the understanding that each programme of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan should be submitted to plenary meeting or to the appropriate Main Committee for review.

However, programme 4 was not included in the list of programmes to be submitted to the Third Committee for review.

(The President)

May I therefore take it that it is the wish of the Assembly that programme 4 should also be submitted to the Third Committee for review?

If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Third Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that yesterday morning I outlined for them the tentative programme of work for the remainder of October.

I should now like to inform members that the Pledging Conference for Development Activities will be held in the mornings of Tuesday, 3 November, and Wednesday, 4 November. The Conference will be opened by the Secretary-General.

I should also like to inform members that the announcement of voluntary contributions to the 1993 programmes of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will take place on Monday, 16 November, in the morning, under my presidency.

I should further like to inform members that the announcement of voluntary contributions to the 1993 programmes of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East will take place on Wednesday, 2 December, in the morning, also under my presidency.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.